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OFFICE MEMO 2 May 1955

TO: Ambassador Collins, American Embassy, Saigon, Viet Nam

FROM: The Army Attache, American Embassy, Saigon, Viet Nam

SUBJECT: Developments of Military Significance during Past 24 Hours

1. Sporadic harassing fires continued by both VNA and Binh Xuyen forces. VNA is not acting aggressively enough to retain the initiative long.

2. Most important development, and the basic reason for loss of momentum, is the uncertainty created by Bao Dai as to General Vy's status. General Ty, General Don and others are bending every effort to prevent a serious split within the armed forces. After several conferences yesterday, General Vy was prevailed upon to leave for Dalat again. On arrival in Saigon today, General Hinh accompanied by General Ty will proceed immediately to Dalat for discussions. Minister of Defense expects an announcement of a "coup", with French and Bao Dai blessing will result from these talks and is extremely worried.

3. Army staff and senior commanders still profess loyalty to Diem but admit they do not know what to do if Diem is dismissed by Bao Dai or a "coup" is announced.

4. Anti-French feeling is still increasing country wide and is causing French military grave concerns. VNA officers are reported distributing handbills in Nha Trang where feeling appears most intense. Handbills threaten all French nationals "if Diem falls." Local French military dispositions and movements are creating uneasiness; however, no violence is expected unless Viet Minh agents are able to create incidents. French armored columns and patrols moved about the city last night, apparently to impress the people with French readiness.

5. Unconfirmed reports at 0930 this morning indicate Bao Dai has reversed himself expressing confidence in Diem and directing General Ty's appointment as Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces. If so, General Vy appears to be on a limb by himself. With Hinh and French encouragement he still can be expected to attempt to rally a portion of the army, and to attempt the above mentioned "coup."

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